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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Letter dated 7 May 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would like to refer you to the letter from the Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan regarding the forthcoming presidential elections in Nagorno Karabakh scheduled to be held on 19 July 2012 (A/66/783-S/2012/271).

It is extremely disappointing to see the reaction of Azerbaijan to the exercise of the fundamental and inalienable right of free elections by the people of Nagorno Karabakh. The fundamental human rights of all nations, including the right to vote and the right to participate in government, are endorsed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948. In particular, article 2 of the Declaration stipulates that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

A nationwide election is an objective indicator of the degree of democratic development, which fully reflects the political will of the people. The upcoming presidential elections in Nagorno Karabakh are another opportunity to prove the commitment of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic to democratic principles and to the value it places on people's participation in government and on fostering democracy.

In the last 20 years, four presidential, five parliamentary and five local government elections were held in Nagorno Karabakh in compliance with

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democratic standards and on the basis of an alternative choice, as witnessed by the numerous election observation reports of independent international observers.

Furthermore, the inalienable right of the Nagorno Karabakh people to determine their own destiny is one of the main guiding principles of the proposals submitted at the ministerial conference in Madrid by the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe towards the peaceful settlement of the conflict.

The international community, including Azerbaijan, must be more than interested to deal with the leadership elected by people of Nagorno Karabakh. This was also witnessed by the first Additional Meeting of the Council of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe held in Helsinki on 24 March 1992, which decided to invite the legitimate authorities of Nagorno Karabakh to the Conference.

The attempts by Azerbaijan to deprive the people of Nagorno Karabakh of the right to democratic development and the promotion of civil society are counterproductive and condemned to failure. In this regard, the criticism of human rights and democratic processes by a country that is distinguished mostly by the absence of such processes causes serious concerns.

Lastly, I call upon the representatives of Azerbaijan to refrain from the practice of spreading groundless allegations in the framework of the United Nations and other international organizations and work instead towards a political settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 35, 39, 67 and 83, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Garen **Nazarian**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative